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# USDA Inside USDA Information

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HERE TIS...

Update on Science Information Conference registrations...those latest publications ratings...a regional update...some positive speech thoughts...more comments and details on information here and there...plus a bit of balderdash as usual. Read on.

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AIMING FOR AMES?

Sign-ups for the Science Information Conference at Ames show 100 early registrants. In fact, if you haven't already sent in your reservation for the workshop--that day and a half session to be held after the main conference--you may be out of luck. Already there are two sections and the committee is working on a third. Each will have 20 people.

We aren't saying that's bad news, but the good news is that housing costs have been lowered to \$23 nightly for singles...\$28 for doubles. Now those of you who have not registered because of budget problems can reconsider. Even though the workshop seems to be filled up, you can still be assured that you'll get in on the main conference.

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LET'S HEAR IT FOR...

GPA's Jim Webster recently sent agency inf directors copies of a couple of speeches some of the rest of you may want. Write "Inside..." if you do.

They're talks given by administrators of the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) before a group of rural electric borrowers' editors during the summer.

As Jim said, it's gratifying to hear an administrator talk positively about information. Included are comments such as: "communication...is going to be an instrument of board policy, a primary management tool." And..."REA...is interested in demystifying communications and giving you practical, usable tools to work with, aids and suggestions for preparing work-plans and budgets..." Or, how about..."There is an obligation to communicate if public trust is to be assured...."

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DOWN WITH TYPEWRITERS

Twice we did it and only one of you commented. Maybe you were too nice to mention it.

Ray Waggoner, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, says we misspelled "Colombia," and we did...in those items over the past couple of weeks about translated articles. We always have said that typewriters can't spell. (We came up with Columbia.)

Gordon Graham, U. of Arizona, says there's another word...or two words...of like nature: Whisky versus whiskey. Do you know the difference? One is Scotch and the other is bourbon.

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WHAT? NO WINNERS?

Claude Gifford, GPA, says maybe we should be doing some prepublication research on titles and subject matter of proposed pubs.

Both young tigers and old cats among inf people seem to have been stumped by "Inside..." on that rating contest of a couple of weeks ago. As you'll recall, the challenge was to pick the top three and bottom three pubs from a selection of six free publications offered this summer by the Consumer Information Center (CIC).

Here's how the six pubs rated...in actual orders for the 138 pubs offered free by CIC:

<u>2</u>	Providing for your heirs--non-sale property transfers
<u>6</u>	Can I get free or cheap public land
<u>5</u>	Dried flower arrangements
<u>3</u>	Tranquilizers
<u>1</u>	Cancer information service
<u>4</u>	A guide to consumer action

We haven't heard from anyone who picked the top and bottom three. If you did, let us know.

By the way, even without doing prepublication research on titles, USDA pubs have been doing great this summer. Among those 138 pubs offered by CIC are 31 from USDA...3 of them were 1, 2, 3 in popularity among all the 138. USDA had 5 of the top 10, 9 of the top 15 and 12 of the top 25. USDA pubs accounted for 46 percent of the top 50 pubs offered and only 6 percent of the bottom 50.

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...FROM UP NAWTH

K.M. King, professor and chairman of the Dept. of Land Resource Science, University of Guelph, Ontario Ag. College, Guelph, Ont. N1G2W1, recently sent us a copy of a progress report (about land resources) you might want...particularly if you're involved in structures activities. Write King direct.

The report explains Ontario's 1978 progress on land use and rural development, soils activities, waste disposal, work on soil-plant relations, soil resource inventories and similar topics.

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WELL, HOW 'BOUT THAT?

For you southerners comes a report from Al Horton, Federal Grain Inspection Service, about a yellow sorghum...usually grain sorghum is red. The yellow grain is being produced in South Texas and is disease-resistant. It should appear on the market next year. Al's outfit says Mexican sorghum consumers anticipate no major difficulties with acceptance.

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MORE THAN JUST WIND

We hope the hurricane season has had it...but we thought you might be interested in the involvement the Intergovernmental Affairs unit of GPA had in reporting Hurricane Frederic.

Cooperating with the National Weather Service and its National Hurricane Center, reports received on Sept. 13 gave a quick estimate of damage to agriculture, county-by-county in the states that were in the path of the storm. Those estimates came from State Emergency Boards. Then the Food and Nutrition Service included an analysis of feeding facilities in operation. In Alabama by the time of the report, there were 20 facilities working in Mobile County, feeding 10,000 people and 14 places feeding 3,000 people in Baldwin Co.

In Florida there were 93 places feeding 26,000 people and in Mississippi there were "extensive" facilities operating in Jackson Co., feeding several thousand people and in Harrison Co., 22 kitchens were feeding 4,000.

Significant point is that at that time (2:30 p.m.) the hurricane center was still in northern Alabama.

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ON YOUR MARKS...

The Washington, D.C., chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC) invites all industrial, scientific, medical, engineering and technically-oriented writers and editors to enter the 1979 Technical Publications Competition.

Nelson Fitton, GPA, says objectives of the competition are to identify and encourage excellence in written communications and to recognize superior efforts...thus elevating the level of competence and the status of the profession. Nelson says if you have something you want to enter, write or call him, (202) 447-6623, and he'll send you the rules and entry forms.

We note that there's a deadline for entries of Oct. 26...and entries must have been produced or published between Nov. 1, 1978, through Oct. 31, 1979...and must not have been entered in a previous STC competition. Categories range from annual reports through news articles...there's even a category for ghost written articles and one for newsletters for technical audiences.

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ON THE MOVE

Charlene Olsson, formerly of FSQS, has moved to SEA where she'll be working on popular publications. In Idaho, we note that John Crosiar has moved to the U. of Oregon in Eugene where he'll be assistant director of the news bureau. Also in Idaho, Glenn Holloway is Scott Fedale's assistant in radio-television. Glenn is a native of Washington state.

Then, from Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service, Gerry Schumacher will move to the Foreign Agricultural Service Oct. 7.

Now who did we miss? Let us hear from you.

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FmHA AND ENERGY

Farmers Home Administration inf folks are preparing a report for general distribution about FmHA initiatives in energy conservation and alternate energy source development. It's not intended to be a detailed analysis of every agency activity in the field, but it is intended to give FmHA employees and the public in general a



view of loans that can be made under existing authority and measures that can be taken without specific lending action, such as in building design or siting. Copies should be available in all FmHA offices soon...meanwhile, if you just can't wait, write a note to Stan Weston or call him at (202) 447-4323.

\* \* \*

NEWSLETTERS EVERYWHERE King Lovinger, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), passed around Vol. 1, No. 1 of "Inside APHIS" at the agency inf directors meeting earlier this week.

It's a neat looking tabloid for APHIS folks that combined three existing newsletters and halted plans for two more. It's intended to improve communication within the agency. King said that although it probably will be a monthly, the first issue--8 pages--is experimental and contains a questionnaire that invites readers to give opinions as guidance for future issues.

Alice Skelsey, Science and Education Administration (SEA), announced, at the same meeting, that SEA hopes to have a tabloid of its own for SEA staff within a couple of weeks.

Then Betty Garcia, GPA, pointed out that we should know the future of "USDA," the departmental newsletter, by the end of this week. GPA presented a pitch for a monthly magazine to members of the management council some time ago. We'll report on outcome next week.

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IF YOU'RE OUTLOOKING Jack Roney, World Board, has distributed preliminary programs for this year's Outlook meeting, Nov. 5-8. "Agriculture in a World Setting" is the theme. Jack notes that the notion of agriculture's importance to global economy is not new, but developments in the past decade have dramatically altered the place of agric. in the world setting as we prepare to enter the 1980's.

A pre-registration card, returnable by Oct. 15, went with the preliminary program. If you failed to get it, write to Outlook '80, Room 3506-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250 or call (202) 447-3050.

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THE WAY TO DO IT IS... Carl Sorensen, Dallas regional inf officer, says Frank Byrnes' recent tongue-in-cheek analysis of the life cycle of any project is "absolutely foreign to my way of thinking." Then he suggests: 1--realize a challenge; 2--isolate best solutions; 3--attack with enthusiasm; 4--overcome wet blankets; 5--perspire persistently; 6--complete successfully. Then he says he would add #7--forget about credit and 8--go on to something else.

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REGIONAL OFFICES? At closing, late word was that the GPA request for regional inf offices had been killed by the conference committee...that final decision had not been made but that hopes for the \$300,000 requested were bleak. Next week, perhaps we can have a full report...and we're hoping it will come up all roses.